



## Individual Submission Summary

### Being Black and international in the United States: A case for inclusion for Black African international students in American higher education

In Event: *Representation, inclusion, and positionality: African diaspora experiences across educational spectrum*



#### Mon, April 15, 3:15 to 4:45pm, Hyatt Regency, Floor: Pacific Concourse (Level -1), Pacific G Proposal

The presentation furthers the discourse on multiple Black identities in America, particularly the experiences of Black African international students in U.S. higher education institutions. Using some CRT tenets, we argue for an inclusion of BAIS within the design and delivery of student support services for Black students of color on U.S. campuses.

Few scholars have looked at—and argued for an inclusion of—BAIS in design and provision of student support services for Black students of color.

One of CRT's tenets is the permanence of racism in American society. That is, woven into the fabric of the U.S. society is a system of hierarchical racial categorizations, which inevitably creates a system of advantages (for white majority group) and disadvantages (for people of color, especially Black bodies).

Within the triple consciousness that BAIS navigate—racial (Black), ethnicity (based on country of origin), and residency classification (international students)—perhaps the most consequential which shapes their overall lived experiences in a racially polarized America is race.

BAIS negotiate their fluid—and sometimes nascent—identities within “existing structures and discourses of Blackness and Whiteness” (Asante, Sekimoto, & Brown, 2016, p. 369) in America. So, someone who identifies as BAIS is first Black before they are international, at least from afar—and to White people—before their accent reveals the “international” layer of their identity.

Building on the foregoing, we argue that beyond maintaining international student offices—which at best provide “race-neutral” programming for all international students, including White international students from the UK, Canada, and Australia—university administration should invest in policies and practices that include BAIS in programmatic efforts for Black students of color. For example, in a 2015 racial microaggression study aimed at recognizing the voices of students of color at UIUC, the research team invited only domestic students of color to participate in the research, as if international students' experiences of racialized microaggressions are invalid and inconsequential to overall campus climate.

To achieve SDGs #10 and #16—within the lived experiences of BAIS in America—we suggest that student support services consider the intersectionality of BAIS rather than the extant practice of exclusion—which focuses on their “internationalness” and excludes their Blackness. Some of these strategies include:



- conducting more studies/research on the lived experiences of BAIS to understand how their race-based struggles amplify their already complex challenges as international students;
- incorporating their voices in research on Black students of color and incorporate findings into programmatic efforts aimed at supporting this student demography;

Lastly, we posit that the implications of an exclusionary paradigm will continue to exacerbate the experiences of an already marginalized student demography in America.

Asante, G., Sekimoto, S., & Brown, C. (2016). Becoming “Black”: Exploring the Racialized Experiences of African Immigrants in the United States. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 27(4), 367-384

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